

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Chemtool Fire - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region V

**Subject:** POLREP #5  
Progress  
Chemtool Fire  
C5TM  
Rockton, IL  
Latitude: 42.4718011 Longitude: -89.0646749

**To:** Craig Thomas, EPA R5  
Matt Villicana, USEPA  
Lauren McCarrell, USEPA R5  
Corey Peaslee, USEPA R5  
Cheryl Newton, USEPA R5  
Doug Ballotti, EPA R5  
Tom Short, EPA R5  
Tim Fischer, EPA R5  
Sam Borries, U.S. EPA  
Jason El-Zein, U.S. EPA  
Jim Augustyn, U.S. EPA  
Jaime Brown, U.S. EPA  
Matt Mankowski, U.S. EPA  
Mike Ribordy, U.S. EPA  
John Glover, U.S. EPA  
Kim Churchill, U.S. EPA  
Carolyn Bohlen, U.S. EPA  
HQ EOC, U.S. EPA  
Records Center, U.S. EPA  
Cordell Renner, Tetra Tech  
Rachel Linduska, USEPA R5  
Jeff Kelley, USEPA  
James Justice, EPA Region 5  
Rob Kondreck, USEPA R5  
Jason Sewell, Region 05  
Naeha Dixit, EPA R5  
USCG Fund Center, USCG  
Francisco Arcaute, U.S. EPA

**From:** Craig Thomas, On-Scene Coordinator  
**Date:** 6/19/2021  
**Reporting Period:** 6/18/21 - 6/19/21

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	C5TM / Z5TK	<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>		<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b>	PRP	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	6/14/2021	<b>Start Date:</b>	6/14/2021
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	6/14/2021
<b>FPN#:</b>	E21510	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

The site is located at the Chemtool Incorporated facility in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois. At approximately 07:00 on June 14th, several fire departments from Illinois and Wisconsin responded to a large, six-alarm fire at the facility. Chemtool Incorporated manufactures greases, additives, and other fluids. The facility quickly became fully-involved in the fire and had several explosions.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

The site is located at 1165 Prairie Hill Road in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The facility housed several tanks of various greases, oils, additives, and other fluids, that have been or could be consumed in the fire. The smoke plume and runoff from the fire threatens to release contaminants into the atmosphere, as well as potentially discharging the contents of the tanks to the Rock River.

Over a million gallons of crude were stored on the facility. The facility is located approximately 700 feet from the Rock River. Given the large volume of oil in containers with compromised integrity, EPA believes there is substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway.

### **1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results**

On-Scene Coordinators (OSC) Craig Thomas, Matt Villicana, Lauren McCarrell, and Corey Peaslee mobilized to the site on June 14, 2021. On June 14, 2021, at approximately 09:30 hours, EPA Region 5 Phone Duty Officer activated the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) to respond to the incident. An additional OSC (Robert Kondreck) was deployed 6/16.

According to the Rockton Fire Chief and Potentially Responsible Party (PRP), the fire was discovered at approximately 0700 hours on June 14, 2021. The Rockton Fire Department, Rockford Fire Department, and several other Fire Departments from Illinois and Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) responded to the incident to conduct fire suppression activities.

## **2. Current Activities**

### **2.1 Operations Section**

#### **2.1.1 Narrative**

#### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

The Rockton Fire Department and other fire departments from Illinois and Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) were on-site performing fire suppression activities. A mandatory evacuation was issued for all residents within a one-mile radius at approximately 0700 on June 14, 2021. The evacuation center was located at the Roscoe Middle School in Roscoe, IL, but closed on June 17th. At 1000 June 18<sup>th</sup>, the evacuation order was lifted.

On June 19th the Rockton Fire Department Incident Commander turned incident command over to the Lubrisol Fire Chief.

USEPA currently has three OSCs and eight START contractors deployed to provide air monitoring support for the fire.

USEPA consulted with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to establish action levels for air monitoring data.

The Interagency Modelling and Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMAAC) was consulted by USEPA to develop plume models for the release. The models developed by IMAAC estimated the direction and extent of the plumes and are used as a guide tool to determine placement of air monitoring stations. IMCAAC modeling was discontinued on 6/19.

USEPA START contractors are performing community air monitoring and sampling for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), lower explosive limit (LEL), carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), cyanates (MDI), oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>), particulates, and metals. Air monitoring will continue as long as the fire is active.

Additionally, air sampling was previously conducted using Summa Canisters for VOCs. Three VOC samples were collected on 6/15, two VOCs samples were collected on 6/16 and one VOC sample collected for 6/17. Gilian pumps were used to collect samples for metals analysis on 6/15.

Illinois Civil Support Team (CST) members also provided air monitoring support for the initial response by deploying AreaRAEs to monitor VOCs, LEL, CO, H<sub>2</sub>S, and O<sub>2</sub>. CST demobilized their air monitoring equipment on Thursday 6/17 late PM.

Tuesday morning the RP asked the Incident Commander to allow the use of firefighting foam (the only available firefighting foam onsite at that time). The IC made the decision to allow usage of the foam; at the time it was unknown that the only foam on site at the time contained PFAS. Upon observing pumping operations beginning, U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA requested a halt to those operations until additional boom was deployed on the Rock River and vac trucks were put on standby at several stations downriver to ensure that any foam other materials were contained. In the early afternoon, the non-fluorinated foam Vapor Suppressant Product (VSP) arrived onsite and any continued usage of foam will use VSP. Additional booms were placed in the Rock River in case of site runoff at 0900 on Wednesday 6/16.

On Friday, 6/18 START began monitoring methyl biphenyl isocyanate (MDI) using a diisocyanate chemcassette in an Single Point Monitor (SPM) Flex. The highest detection of 0.6 ppb MDI did not exceed the screening value of 5.0 ppb.

On Saturday, 6/19 several stationary air monitors were again placed nearby the Old Settlers Days festival site, with two contractors roving the site to monitor air quality. Due to interference from the wireless signals at the festival, the AreaRAEs were unable to be monitored remotely, however the DustTraks were able to maintain their signal to the host computer. The monitoring will continue for the festival's duration, with manual data retrieval conducted by START contractors.

On Saturday 6/19, excavation of the facility continued to allow firefighting access to hotspots on site.

On 6/19, START collected a surface water sample from the drainage area along the east side of the facility. The sample is being analyzed for VOCs, SVOCS, Metals, PAHs, PFAs.

USEPA sent an asbestos inspector from START to observe any potential suspected asbestos-containing material in the neighborhood immediately south of the site. Based upon the inspector's observations, the only suspected asbestos containing material identified was a single piece of non-friable asbestos shingle which could not be directly attributed to ChemTool. However, START collect 5 bulk waste samples of ash material for Polarized Light Microscopy Analysis.

Some flare-ups occurred overnight on 6/18, which caused heavy haze and smoke on site. An additional flare up occurred the morning of 6/19; however, the smoke greatly cleared as firefighting efforts continued. On 6/19, the RP's contractors continued removal of debris to provide access to the hotspots of the remaining blaze.

#### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

The RP has been identified as Chemtool Incorporated.

#### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

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## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

USEPA START contractors continue to provide 24-hour air monitoring support during the response while fire suppression activities are ongoing. Additional resources have been deployed for air monitoring during the Old Settlers Festival.

USEPA START contractors also remain prepared to monitor and collect samples from the Rock River, if sheening or any other evidence of a discharge is observed.

Debris cleanup by the RP's contractors continues.

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

USEPA START Contractors will continue to provide 24-hour air monitoring support during the response while fire suppression activities are ongoing.

USEPA START contractors also remain prepared to monitor and collect samples from the Rock River if evidence of a discharge is observed.

Collect samples from first 5 frac tanks filled on site, which may have been impacted by PFAS.

### 2.2.2 Issues

A detection of HCN was detected above ATSDR screening values (above 1.0 ppm) via the CST air monitoring equipment overnight on 6/14 pm to 6/15 am. USEPA and the CST conducted further investigations of HCN, and preliminary evaluation of the data has not reveal any detections above the ATSDR screening value of 1.0 ppm since then.

## 2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

## 2.4 Finance Section

### 2.4.1 Narrative

On 6/16/2021, U.S. EPA requested an FPN (E21510) to address the substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway. U.S. EPA began charging 75% to CERCLA and 25% to the FPN starting 6/16.

### Estimated Costs \*

	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Total To Date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>% Remaining</b>
<b>Extramural Costs</b>				
START	\$175,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$65,000.00	37.14%
<b>Intramural Costs</b>				
USEPA - Direct	\$25,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00	40.00%
<b>Total Site Costs</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>	<b>\$125,000.00</b>	<b>\$75,000.00</b>	<b>37.50%</b>

\* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the

government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

The Lubrisol Fire department contractors are providing a safety officer

### **2.5.2 Liaison Officer**

Francisco Arcaut is fulfilling this role.

### **2.5.3 Information Officer**

EPA has a Public Information Officer established for this response

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

EPA Region 5

Illinois EPA

Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Illinois Civil Support Team

Illinois State Police

Mutual Aid Box Alarm System

Winnebago County Sherriff

Ogle County Sherriff

## **4. Personnel On Site**

EPA - 3

START - 8

Illinois EPA - 4

Firefighters from multiple fire departments.

## **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

## **6. Additional sources of information**

### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

[response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire](https://response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire)

### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

It is anticipated that POLREPS will be provided at 24-hour intervals

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

[response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire](https://response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire)

